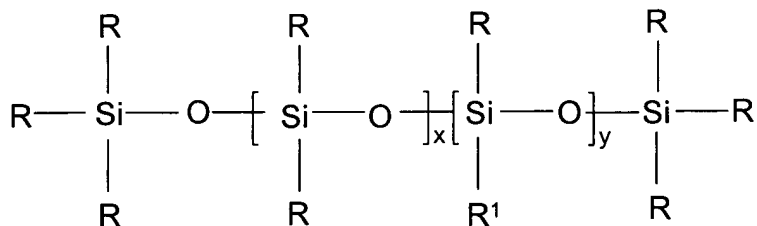


REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

Currently, claims 50-81, including independent claims 50, 64, and 80, are pending in the present application. Independent claim 50, for instance, is directed to a melt extrudable composition comprising one or more elastomeric polymers selected from the group consisting of styrenic triblock copolymers (e.g., styrene-ethylene/propylene-styrene, styrene-ethylene/butylene-styrene, etc.), styrenic tetrablock copolymers (e.g., styrene-ethylene/propylene-styrene-ethylene/propylene, styrene-ethylene/butylene-styrene-ethylene/butylene, etc.), and combinations thereof. The elastomeric polymers constitute about 50 wt.% or more of the composition. The composition also comprises one or more polyorganosiloxanes having the following formula:



wherein,

R is an alkyl radical;

R¹ is a monovalent organic radical comprising an ethylene oxide group, vicinal epoxy group, or amino group; and

x and y are independently selected from the group consisting of positive integers.

As an initial matter, the Office Action indicated that previous dependent claims 30-31 and 38 would be allowable if rewritten into independent claim format. In response, Applicants have rewritten claims 30 and 31 as new independent claim 80 and dependent claim 81, respectively. Applicants thus submit that claims 80-81 are in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, previous dependent claims 25 and 35, the limitations of which have now been incorporated into new independent claims 50 and 64, were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,413,655 to Nohr, et al. Nohr, et al. is directed to a composition used to prepare nonwoven webs with either improved tensile strength characteristics or long-term hydrophilicity or wettability. More specifically, the composition contains a “first component” that is a polysiloxane polyether and a “second component” that is fumed silica. (Col. 6-8). Nohr, et al. indicates that the nonwoven web may be formed from a “thermoplastic polyolefin” and provides sixteen (16) different examples of thermoplastic polyolefins, including polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, and the like. (Col. 6, ll. 31-54). Notably, none of these sixteen (16) examples are elastomeric styrenic triblock and/or tetrablock copolymers as required by independent claims 50 and 61.

Nohr, et al. does briefly mention that the term “thermoplastic polyolefin” includes “blends of two or more polyolefins and *random and block copolymers prepared from two or more different unsaturated monomers.*” (Col. 6, ll. 50-55). Despite all of the examples to the contrary, the Office Action nevertheless relied on the last portion of this generic disclosure to assert that Nohr, et al. suggests the use of a “styrene-ethylene/butylene-styrene block copolymer”, i.e., a styrenic triblock copolymer.

However, the mere reference to "two or more unsaturated monomers" in no way anticipates the use of *styrenic triblock and/or tetrablock copolymers*. To the contrary, such a broad disclosure lends itself to an endless number of possible combinations, including polymers that are not even block copolymers, much less styrenic triblock and/or tetrablock copolymers. The absence of a teaching to employ the claimed styrenic triblock and/or tetrablock copolymers is even further bolstered by Nohr, et al.'s express preference for polyethylene and polypropylene. In fact, every single Example of Nohr, et al. employs polypropylene. (Cols. 16-25).

In any event, Applicants emphasize that Nohr, et al. completely fails to recognize the benefits achieved by combining the claimed elastomeric styrenic triblock and/or tetrablock copolymers with the polyorganosiloxane. Among other things, the claimed polyorganosiloxane has been discovered to lower the extrusion temperature of elastomeric styrenic block copolymers to aid in the extrusion process. (See e.g., Appl. p. 3, ll. 10-14). In Nohr, et al., the additive composition is used with the polyolefin polymer to simply increase its tensile strength or improve wettability. Thus, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims patentably define over Nohr, et al.


It is believed that the present application is in complete condition for allowance and favorable action, is therefore requested. Examiner Peng is invited and encouraged to telephone the undersigned, however, should any issues remain after consideration of this Amendment.

Please charge any additional fees required by this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 04-1403.

Appl. No. 10/724,654
Amdt. Dated May 8, 2006
Reply to Office Action of February 7, 2006

Respectfully requested,

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